

GANNAWARRA *CONNECT*



July-September 2026

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CONNECT WITH COUNCIL

Residents will be able to discuss their concerns with Councillors and staff thanks to the Connect With Council program, which will visit communities across the Gannawarra during 2026.

PAGE 3—MORE INFORMATION

FROM THE MAYOR

The annual Community Satisfaction Survey provides a snapshot of your views regarding Council, how we are representing you, and areas where you want improvement to occur.

The 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey saw Council record its strongest result since 2017, with increases recorded in areas where we engage with our communities. This reflects a united approach by Councillors and staff to advocate for our community's needs. However, Gannawarra West has spoken clearly that Council has work to do. Council values Quambatook, Lalbert, Kerang lakes and Kerang West. We must demonstrate this by focusing on those communities with service delivery, value for rates and leadership with regard to renewable energy projects, mineral sands mining and flooding.

During the past year, Council has regularly raised concerns with the State Government regarding the compulsory access and acquisition of farmers land regarding VNI West, and has publicly questioned how the proposed implementation of the Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund levy on primary producing properties will impact residents.

We have also called on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) to recalibrate the Murray-Darling Basin Plan to reflect that the municipality has been the hardest impacted area in northern Victoria. Influenced by evidence and conversations between community and Council, our five-page submission to the 2026 Basin Plan Review features seven recommendations that aim to reduce the socioeconomic impact the implementation of the Basin Plan is having on our communities.

Advocating for our communities will be important in the coming months as campaigning for the State Election increases. With our current Murray Plains representative, Peter Walsh retiring, there will be a greater focus by all political parties on the electorate's needs. This provides Council with the unique opportunity to meet with all candidates and outline what our communities require to help them thrive.

Regards,
Mayor Garner Smith



COUNCIL INFORMATION

YOUR COUNCILLORS



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COUNCIL MEETING DETAILS

The **July 2026 Meeting of Council** will be held on **Wednesday, 15 July**, starting at 6pm.

The **August 2026 Meeting of Council** will be held on **Wednesday, 19 August**, starting at 6pm.

The **September 2026 Meeting of Council** will be held on **Wednesday, 16 September**, starting at 6pm.

All meetings are held at The Glasshouse, Kerang (2 Shadforth Street).

Changes to meeting details and times will be promoted via *Gannawarra News* and Council's Facebook page.

Agendas for Meetings of Council are available online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/meetings two days prior to each meeting. All Council Meetings are recorded, with a recording available to view 24 hours after the meeting at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/meetings.

Residents can submit up to two questions per person per meeting for consideration, which can be done by completing a form available online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/questiontime or from the Cohuna and Kerang Customer Service Centres by 5pm the day prior to the Council Meeting.

CONTACTING COUNCIL

IN PERSON

Cohuna Customer Service Centre
21-23 King Edward Street
Kerang Customer Service Centre
47 Victoria Street

BY PHONE

(03) 5450 9333 during business hours

BY EMAIL

council@gsc.vic.gov.au

BY MAIL

PO Box 287
Kerang VIC 3579

ONLINE

Report an issue at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/request

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook – www.facebook.com/gannawarra

COMMUNITY NEWS

CONNECT WITH COUNCIL PROGRAM CONTINUES

Following its successful introduction in April, the Connect With Council program will continue throughout the Gannawarra during 2026.

Developed following feedback received from residents, the program enables you to discuss your concerns with Councillors and staff.

Sessions will be held during July-September on the following dates:

- **Wednesday, 29 July (12 noon-1.30pm):** Murrabit Hall, coinciding with the Murrabit Community Lunch.
- **Thursday, 13 August (6pm-7.30pm):** Lalbert Community Complex, coinciding with Mallee Eagles Football Netball Club training.
- **Wednesday, 16 September (10.30am-12 noon):** Outside Ritchies IGA in King George Street, Cohuna.

Work continues to confirm times and locations for sessions occurring between October and December at Koondrook, Lake Charm and Leitchville. Details regarding these sessions will be promoted on Council's website, Facebook page and in future editions of *Gannawarra News* and *Gannawarra Connect* once confirmed.

Pictured are Mayor Garner Smith and Kerang Optical staff (top), and Councillors and staff discussing matters (bottom) during the Connect With Council session held in Kerang in April.



RATES NOTICES COMING

Ratepayers are expected to receive their rates notices for 2026/27 in the mail or by email from late August.

Ratepayers may choose to pay their rates in full, with payment due by mid-February 2027.

The most popular option is by instalments, with the first instalment payment due by Wednesday, 30 September 2026.

Ratepayers who are experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact Council on (03) 5450 9333 as early as possible to discuss payment options.

JOIN OUR LIFEGUARD TEAM THIS SUMMER

Applications to join Council's Outdoor Pool Lifeguards team for the 2026/27 swimming pool season will open soon.

This important team oversees operations at the Council-managed Cohuna and Kerang swimming pools, which are open between mid-November and mid-March each year.

Applications are open to anyone aged 16 years and over, with Life Saving Victoria Lifeguard training, first aid training and accreditation provided.

For more information, visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au or follow Council on Facebook.

COMMUNITY NEWS

2027 COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY UNDERWAY

Independent market research agency, National Field Services is conducting Council's Community Satisfaction Survey throughout 2026/27.

As part of the survey, a total of 400 residents over the age of 18 will be contacted by telephone between June 2026 and March 2027 to assess Council's overall performance. This includes how Council engages with the community, services provided and the condition of locally-managed roads.

The first group of 100 interviews occurred throughout June, with the next 100 interviews to be conducted between Thursday, 13 August and Sunday, 13 September.

Interviews will also be conducted throughout November 2026 and January-March 2027.

Anyone who has any queries about the Community Satisfaction Survey is encouraged to contact Council on (03) 5450 9333.



JOIN THE WARM WINTER READ AND WIN

Gannawarra Library Service members can be in the running to win some great prizes thanks to the Warm Winter Read.

As part of the Public Libraries Victoria initiative, library service members aged 16 years and older are encouraged to track the number of days they read.

There are various prizes available by participating in the statewide competition, including book bundles, book hampers, Sony headphones and a Kobo eReader. To register, visit <http://readbooks.com.au/wwr>

Gannawarra Library Service members can also be in the running to win a \$100 gift card by submitting a book review, which can be done by using a form available from the service's branches at Cohuna, Kerang, Leitchville and Quambatook.

2026/27 BUDGET SUPPORTS KEY SERVICES

Thank you to all residents who had their say on Council's 2026/27 Proposed Budget.

Adopted at Council's June 2026 Meeting, the 2026/27 Budget features a significant investment in capital works, with many of these improvements

made possible thanks to funding from the State and Federal Governments.

Key services Council provides to the community, such as the maintenance of roads, libraries, waste management and recreational facilities, will also be supported thanks to the 2026/27 Budget.

The 2026/27 Budget complies with the State Government's Fair Go Rates System, which states that the total revenue raised through rates and municipal charges cannot increase by more than 2.75 per cent compared to the previous year.

For more information regarding the 2026/27 Budget, click on the "Budget" heading at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/documents.



GRAB YOUR GO PACK! AND BE READY FOR THE NEXT EMERGENCY

Council has partnered with Northern District Community Health, local neighbourhood houses, Vivid and Community Living & Respite Services (CLRS) to distribute free Go Pack! emergency preparedness bags to National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants living in the Gannawarra.

Developed by Bendigo Health's Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit, Campaspe Shire Council, Vivid and CLRS, each Go Pack! features a 'First 72 hours' flyer, an emergency plan work sheet, and instructions to help participants to get ready for an emergency before it happens. A check-list fridge magnet and a water bottle funded by Council has been added to Go Packs! for Gannawarra residents. The bag encourages participants to add other items such as important documents, medication, mobile devices and chargers, toiletries, torch, personal care items, and some packaged food.

Go Packs! are available from neighbourhood houses at Cohuna and Kerang, the Quambatook Community Resource Centre, Council's Kerang Customer Service Centre and Northern District Community Health's offices at Cohuna and Kerang.



CENSUS NIGHT IS COMING

Residents across the Gannawarra will be required on Tuesday, 11 August to complete the Australian Census.

Conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics every five years, the Census is the most comprehensive snapshot of the country and tells the story of how we are changing. Census data tells us about the economic, social and cultural make-up of the country.

The Census form asks questions about things such as your age, country of birth, religion, ancestry, language used at home, work and education. Only a Census can provide this information for the entire country, including small geographic areas and small population groups.

Data collected via the Census will be used by all levels of government to plan local services for individuals, families and communities.

Most households will get a letter with instructions to complete the Census online, including a Census number and temporary password. Paper forms will also be available for residents who would like to complete the Census using this format.

For more information regarding the Census, please visit www.census.abs.gov.au

EoI FOR COUNCIL-OWNED UNITS AT QUAMBATOOK

Expressions of Interest (EoI) regarding the future of three Council-owned units located at 9-11 Guthrie Street, Quambatook are being accepted up to 5pm Friday, 24 July.

To assist with the EoI process, Council has developed a guide outlining the submission requirements and process, which is available online by clicking on the "Future of Quambatook units" heading at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/yoursay and from Council's Kerang Customer Service Centre. Submissions may include proposals involving purchase, lease, community use, transfer or other future use opportunities for the site.

Handwritten submissions prepared in accordance with the guidelines may also be delivered to Council's Kerang Customer Service Centre.

COMMUNITY NEWS

CONTROL YOUR PETS WHEN OUT AND ABOUT

Residents are reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure their dogs can be controlled when walking their pets throughout the



Gannawarra Shire.

As outlined in *Council Policy 68 - Dogs and Cats*, dogs must be kept on a leash at all recreation reserves when a sporting fixture is taking place, at playgrounds and parks where children's play equipment is installed, and at the following parks:

- Apex Park, Garden Park and Gilrue Park at Cohuna.
- Atkinson Park at Kerang.
- Gorton Point at Kangaroo Lake.

Dogs can be walked off leash on private property, at recreation reserves when a sporting fixture is not taking place and parks not listed in *Council Policy 68 - Dogs and Cats*.

If a dog is off leash in these locations, the person responsible for the dog needs to ensure their pet does not worry, cause a nuisance or threaten any person or animal.

For more information, visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/animals

WHAT GOES IN YOUR YELLOW HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING BIN?

Did you know that many of the items you dispose of can go into your yellow household recycling bin?

These items include:

- Cardboard, newspapers, letters, envelopes, paper and advertising materials.
- Glass bottles, jars and milk and juice cartons.
- Aluminium and steel cans.

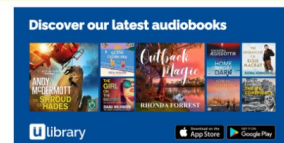
For more information, please click on the "Kerbside Waste and Recycling Collection" heading at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/waste



Did you know that membership with us is *FREE* and you will have access to...

- New release Fiction and Non-Fiction titles for adults, teens and children
- eBooks, eAudio books, eMagazines, eComics, TV, music & movie streaming, our online catalogue with Libraries Victoria and Britannica Library Edition
- DVDs and audio books
- Magazines and local newspapers
- Local History and in-library access to ancestry.com
- Regular children's programs including Story Time, School Holiday activities and after-school programs
- Books on Wheels home delivery for those unable to physically visit our branches due to illness or incapacity
- Book Chat, author talks, activities and events for adults through to seniors including exhibitions
- Basic IT and computer help with our staff
- Wi-Fi, scanning, public internet computers and access to computer Pods at Kerang (for small online/ in-person meetings, quiet study, podcast creation etc.)
- Printing and photocopying (charges apply)

Scan the QR code below to become an online member and have instant access to our E-Library, or drop in to one of our branches at Kerang, Cohuna and Leitchville or the Quambatook Agency and fill out a membership application



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GATEWAY VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE TO SHINE

The Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre continues to provide a warm welcome to people exploring the Gannawarra.

Feedback consistently highlights the outstanding contribution of Gateway volunteers and staff, with guests praising the team's "knowledge of the area" and regularly describing Cohuna as a "lovely town", "welcoming community" with "friendly people". Many visitors also note they plan to return, reflecting the positive impression created by everyone.



The region recently received further recognition from Suzie Shearer, who was a key organiser of the Australian National Barefoot Waterski Championships, who described Gannawarra as a community "oozing civic pride and a big community heartbeat".

The Gateway's gift shop continues to expand its range of locally made and regionally inspired products, providing visitors with an opportunity to take home a piece of the Gannawarra while supporting local makers and producers. Planning is also underway for a Christmas Corporate Hamper campaign, which will showcase local products and provide businesses with a unique gifting option that celebrates the region and supports local enterprise.

Council extends its sincere thanks to the dedicated volunteers whose local knowledge, passion and hospitality help showcase the very best of the Gannawarra to visitors from across Australia and beyond.

UNLOCKING KOONDROOK'S FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Koondrook and Barham-based residents, businesses and community groups are invited to attend a free ACRE Community Workshop, occurring at cluBarham on Wednesday, 29 July from 4pm-7.30pm as part of the Lead a New Future for Your Community program.

The third workshop in the program will bring as many community voices as possible together to identify shared opportunities, establish practical commitments and build accountability for future action.

Co-facilitated by participants from the Translating Leadership program, the workshop is designed to turn community ideas into achievable next steps.

For more information about the program, visit <https://acre.org.au/our-services/lead-a-new-future-for-your-community-koondrook/>

BUSINESS SUPPORT NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE

Council's Business Support Newsletter is your guide to grants and training opportunities, workshops, business tips and local success stories.

To receive this newsletter via email, scan the QR code above.



SUPPORT THE GROW YOUR OWN CAREERS EXPO

Local high school students will benefit from the Grow Your Own Careers Expo, occurring at The Glasshouse, Kerang on Friday, 31 July.

Hosted by Council in partnership with the Murray Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network, this special event will enable students to connect with employers, training providers and industries as part of efforts to showcase local career pathways and help grow the Gannawarra's future workforce.

Various local and regionally-based employers will be represented on the day.

Details regarding the expo will be shared via the schools invited to attend, with Council to produce a wrap regarding this special event in early August.

COMMUNITY *EVENTS*

IMMUNISATION SESSIONS BY APPOINTMENT

JULY 2026

Wednesday, 15 July

Cohuna (10.30am-12 noon)

Kerang (4pm-5.30pm)

AUGUST 2026

Wednesday, 5 August

Kerang (10.30am-12 noon)

Wednesday, 19 August

Cohuna (10.30am-12 noon)

Kerang (4pm-5.30pm)

SEPTEMBER 2026

Wednesday, 2 September

Kerang (10.30am-12 noon)

Wednesday, 16 September

Cohuna (10.30am-12 noon)

Kerang (4pm-5.30pm)

NOTE: Bookings must be made prior to attending any of Council's immunisation sessions, which can be done by phoning (03) 5450 9333.

For more details, visit
www.gsc.vic.gov.au/immunisation

WHAT'S ON - JULY-SEPTEMBER 2026

8 JULY

Bar-Rook Koondrook Probus Club

25 JULY

Kerang Community Market

26 JULY

Cohuna Farmers & Makers Market

1 AUGUST

Murrabit Country Market

12 AUGUST

Bar-Rook Koondrook Probus Club

22 AUGUST

Kerang Community Market

23 AUGUST

Cohuna Farmers & Makers Market

5 SEPTEMBER

Murrabit Country Market

9 SEPTEMBER

Bar-Rook Koondrook Probus Club

26 SEPTEMBER

Kerang Community Market

27 SEPTEMBER

Cohuna Farmers & Makers Market

3 OCTOBER

Murrabit Country Market

FIRST AND THIRD TUESDAYS OF THE MONTH

Chatty Café, Kerang

SECOND AND FOURTH THURSDAYS OF THE MONTH

Craft and Chat, Kerang

EVERY SECOND TUESDAY

Carers Group, Kerang

EVERY MONDAY

Barham Koondrook Men's Shed

Cohuna Pram Brigade Social Group

Walk Safe Rural walking group,

Kerang

EVERY TUESDAY

Cohuna Men's Shed

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Barham Koondrook Men's Shed

Cohuna Men's Shed

Murrabit Crafty & Chatty Café

Waters Edge Walkers, Cohuna

EVERY THURSDAY

Cohuna Men's Shed

Kerang Line Dancing

Murrabit Line Dancing

Soup and a Sandwich, Kerang

EVERY SATURDAY

parkrun, Cohuna and Kerang

Grow Collective Garden, Kerang

For details or to add your event to Council's calendar of events, visit
www.gsc.vic.gov.au/events



Gannawarra Shire Council acknowledges the Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta and Wamba Wamba people as the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Gannawarra.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their rich culture and connection to Country.

NOTE: All information that features in this edition of Gannawarra Connect was correct at the time of publishing.

RECEIVE GANNAWARRA CONNECT IN YOUR INBOX

Did you know that you can now receive the latest edition of *Gannawarra Connect* by email?

To sign up to receive Council's news and/or editions of *Gannawarra News* and *Gannawarra Connect* by email, visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/newsletters

If you would like the latest information regarding community programs and grant opportunities sent to you electronically, visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/communitydirectory and click on the "Community updates" link.